

VZCZCXRO2674  
OO RUEHPA  
DE RUEHJL #0476 2081047  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
O 271047Z JUL 06  
FM AMEMBASSY BANJUL  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6859  
INFO RUEHZK/ECOWAS COLLECTIVE

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANJUL 000476

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

DAKAR PLS PASS RAO, DAO, AND ODC

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/27/2016  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [ASEC](#) [PTER](#) [GA](#) [LE](#)  
SUBJECT: TFLE01: FURTHER GAMBIAN REACTION TO MIDEAST  
FIGHTING

REF: BANJUL 472 AND PREVIOUS

Classified By: AMBASSADOR JOSEPH STAFFORD, REASON 1.4 (D, G)

PRESIDENT JAMMEH CONTINUES TO DENOUNCE ISRAEL

-----  
11. (SBU) Following his July 21 statement criticizing Israel over the Mideast violence (reftel), President Jammeh has continued to denounce Israel. In a July 24 speech, he spoke of an "agenda of war in the Middle East" aimed at the destruction of Syrian and Iran so as to "allow the expansion of Israel." Displaying his penchant for bombast, he warned that the Mideast fighting could widen and become "another World War." Observing that some might ask about the reason for The Gambia's interest in the Mideast, Jammeh pointed to the historically important role of the Lebanese community in this country's economic life.

STATEMENT BY SUPREME ISLAMIC COUNCIL

-----  
12. (SBU) The Gambia's Supreme Islamic Council (SIC), principal advisory body to the GOTG on Islamic religious matters, has also weighed in with an anti-Israeli pronouncement. In a July 26 statement, SIC President Alhaji Banding Drammeh portrayed Israeli military action in Lebanon as "one of the most barbaric and appalling military offensives in history." He called for urgent UN intervention to impose a cease-fire.

AMBASSADOR'S STATEMENT

-----  
13. (SBU) In remarks at the July 26 opening of a National Assembly facility built with USG support, Ambassador took the occasion to address the Mideast crisis, registering our deep regret over the loss of life in Israel, Lebanon, and Gaza and noting, with reference to Israel, the right of any country to self-defense. In his remarks, which received prominent coverage in the local media July 27, he stressed our extensive, ongoing efforts on behalf of an "urgent and enduring" end to the fighting, as exemplified by the Secretary's visit to the region this week.

SIPDIS

EAC MEETING

-----  
14. (C) Embassy's EAC met July 27; there was a consensus that, notwithstanding the ongoing reaction here to the Mideast violence and the anti-Israeli bias in Gambian pronouncements, there were no signs of public protests or other threats to U.S. interests emerging. EAC members noted that the GOTG had so far failed to accede to a request by elements of the

Lebanese-origin community to stage a demonstration in front of the UN office complex here. EAC members also agreed that the Embassy's current security posture remains appropriate.  
STAFFORD